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From: Lawler, Michael (DPH)
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2010 5:44 PM
To: Nassif, Julianne (DPH)
Subject: drug court conference

Julie,

Over the years the Drug Lab has endured rumors that downtown questions the validity of supporting our work through two mindsets:

- 1) Why is DPH helping the police in criminal actions?
- 2) Shouldn't we be spending the same money for treatment programs?

Whether the rumors are true or false, I have been researching these questions on my own time, to meet the objections as if they were true. I have been accumulating a body of material which indicates that people don't enter treatment programs unless they face legal pressure with the possibility of imprisonment.

Many states have taken this phenomenon to a new level with the development of devoted Drug Courts. I know you had a proposal out to the Boston Courts for such a court to be based at "West Roxbury" court a couple of blocks over from the Lab. Chuck says this didn't pan out.

Almost tandem to the development of the Drug Courts around the rest of the country is a growing **active** philosophy of Drug Abuse as a Public Health problem.

More directly to the point and with a sense of some irony, I would alert you that the National Association of Drug Court Professionals is having a Training Conference *here in Boston* in June. Boston is probably the only major city in the U.S. without a drug court. There are about 2,000 now throughout the U.S.

Anyway, (permit me this light hearted approach), anyway wouldn't it be really cool if you were able to get to this conference with our DPH commissioner and the Chief Administrative Justice of Suffolk County. I wish I had seen the conference listing earlier, when there might have been more of a possibility a "team approach." Any possibility you could get over there yourself and pack more guns in the future for a "drug court" approach?

As ever, Lawler